



*We Exist for the Academic Excellence of All Students*

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March 30, 2012

TO: Dr. Charles N. Davis  
University of Missouri - Columbia

FROM: Kathy Looten, Records Custodian

SUBJECT: 1/31/12 Sunshine Request

Attached please find a copy of the documents you requested.

Thank you.

Enclosure

May 8, 2008 Revised 5/00

## CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

Objection relates to: ...Library Book ...Textbook ☒ Other, please specify *Novel**Novel used in IB English III (Junior Year)*Title... *The House of the Spirits, Translated from the Spanish by*  
 (Type of resource)  
 Author... *Isabel Allende* *Magda Bogin*Producer or Publisher... *Bantam Books* Copyright Date... *1982* (*original, Bantam edition*  
*reissue 1993*)Request initiated by *[REDACTED]*Telephone... *[REDACTED]* Address... *[REDACTED]*City... *Springfield, MO* Zip Code... *[REDACTED]*Complainant represents: ☒ Individual .... Organization .... Group

(Name of organization or group).....

- Contact inappropriate for high school students.* Please see attached letters and documents for explanation.
1. Reason for objection (Please be specific; cite pages, if applicable) *Every chapter contains graphic detail of adult sexual activity, or perversity or criminal sexual conduct*
  2. Did you examine or read the material in its entirety? What parts did you view or read?  
*Yes, Bayle read book in its entirety. I read parts or excerpts such as enclosed, and other portions. Selected portions can be termed "pornographic". The book is Adult Fiction.*
  3. What would you like the district to do about this material?  
☐ do not assign/lend it to my child  
☒ withdraw it from all readers/students as well as my child  
☐ send it back to the staff selection committee for re-evaluation  
☐ other  
 If other, please specify the action.

Signature *[REDACTED]*

*The House of the Spirits*

By

Isabel Allende, 1982

Translated from the Spanish

By Magda Bogin

Excerpts taken from paperback copy:

**Chapter 1 Rosa the Beautiful, p. 38-39 (especially 39)** - Background:

- i) Rosa, early 20's, dies from poisoned wine intended to kill her father
- ii) Clara, Rosa's sister, age 10
- iii) Autopsy of Rosa's naked body is performed on family's kitchen table in the middle of the night. Clara watches autopsy from hidden area, and then sees a young mortician kiss, fondle, and explore her dead sister's body.

**Chapter 8 The Count, p. 258-260** - Blanca enters her husband's (the Count's) secret room full of pornographic displays of perverse activities involving the house servants.

**Chapter 9 Little Alba, mostly on page 286, maybe 287** - Background:

- i) Esteban Garcia - grandson of E. Trueba by Trueba's rape of the boy's grandmother; full of hate and anger;
- ii) Alba - legitimate granddaughter of Trueba
- iii) Alba, age 6, is molested by E. Garcia, age 15. In later chapters E. Garcia continues to threaten, then arrest and torture Alba.

**Chapter 10 The Epoch of Decline, p. 316-317** - Graphic description of another of Esteban Trueba's visits to a brothel and favorite prostitute, Transito.

**Chapter 13 The Terror, p. 371, bottom half page** - details of how Jaime, son of Esteban Trueba, is being tortured while E. Trueba is celebrating overthrow of government.

coming from under the drawing-room door, and she was on the verge of going in, but she was afraid she would run into her father and that he would send her back to bed. So she went toward the kitchen, thinking to comfort herself against Nana's breasts. She crossed the main courtyard, passed between the camellias and the miniature orange trees, went through the sitting rooms of the second wing of the house and the dark open corridors, where the faint gas lights were left burning every night in case there was an earthquake and to scare the bats away, and arrived in the third courtyard, where the service rooms and kitchen were. There the house lost its aristocratic bearing and the kennels, chicken coops, and servants' quarters began. Farther on was the stable where the old horses Nivea still rode were kept, even though Severo del Valle had been one of the first to buy an automobile. The kitchen door and shutters were closed, and so was the pantry. Instinct told Clara that something out of the ordinary was going on inside. She tried to see in but her nose didn't reach the window ledge. She had to fetch a wooden box and pull it to the window. She stood on tiptoe and looked through a crack between the wooden shutter and the window frame, which was warped with damp and age. Then she saw inside.

Dr. Cuevas, that kind, sweet, wonderful old man with the thick beard and ample paunch, who had helped her into this world and attended her through all the usual childhood illnesses and all her asthma attacks, had been transformed into a dark, fat vampire just like the ones in her Uncle Marcos's books. He was bent over the table where Nana prepared her meals. Next to him was a young man she had never seen before, pale as the moon, his shirt stained with blood and his eyes drunk with love. She saw her sister's snow-white legs and naked feet. Clara began to shake. At that moment Dr. Cuevas moved aside and she was able to see the dreadful spectacle of Rosa lying on her back on the marble slab, a deep gash forming a canal down the front of her body, with her intestines beside her on the salad platter. Rosa's head was twisted toward the window through which Clara was squinting, and her long green hair hung like a fern from the table onto the tiled floor, which was stained with blood. Her eyes were closed, but the little girl, because of the

shadows, her own distance, and her imagination, thought she saw a supplicating and humiliated expression on her sister's face.

Stock-still on her wooden box, Clara could not keep from watching until the very end. She peered through the crack for a long time, until the two men had finished emptying Rosa out, injecting her veins with liquid, and bathing her inside and out with aromatic vinegar and essence of lavender. She stood there until they had filled her with mortician's paste and sewn her up with a curved upholsterer's needle. She stayed until Dr. Cuevas rinsed his hands in the sink and dried his tears, while the other one cleaned up the blood and the viscera. She stayed until the doctor left, putting on his black jacket with a gesture of infinite sadness. She stayed until the young man she had never seen before kissed Rosa on the lips, the neck, the breasts, and between the legs; until he wiped her with a sponge, dressed her in her embroidered nightgown, and, panting, rearranged her hair. She stayed until Nana and Dr. Cuevas came and dressed Rosa in her white gown and put on her hair the crown of orange blossoms that they'd kept wrapped in tissue paper for her wedding day. She stayed until the assistant took her in his arms with the same tenderness with which he would have picked her up and carried her across the threshold of his house if she had been his bride. She could not move until the first lights of dawn appeared. Only then did she slide back into her bed, feeling within her the silence of the entire world. Silence filled her utterly. She did not speak again until nine years later, when she opened her mouth to announce that she was planning to be married.

since he normally paid no attention to her problems. So did the servant's face, which with its popped-out eyes had finally lost the impassive gaze of an Incan idol. She decided to embark on an investigation of the nomadic mummies. That night she excused herself early after telling her husband that she was going to take a tranquilizer to be sure of falling asleep. But instead she drank a large cup of black coffee and stationed herself behind her door, prepared to spend many hours waiting.

She heard the first footsteps close to midnight. She opened the door with the utmost caution and stuck her head out just as a tiny crouched figure was moving down the hall. This time she was positive she had not dreamt it, but because of the weight of her unborn child it took her almost a minute to reach the corridor. It was a chilly night and the desert breeze was blowing, making the old wooden ceilings creak and the curtains swell like black sails on the high seas. Ever since she was little, when she listened to Nana's stories of the bogeyman down in the kitchen, she had feared the dark, but now she did not dare turn on the lights or she would frighten the tiny mummies during their erratic strolls.

Suddenly a hoarse, muffled sound broke the thick silence of the night, as if it was coming from the bottom of a coffin, or so Blanca thought. She was beginning to fall victim to a morbid fascination with things from beyond the grave. She stopped in her tracks, her heart in her mouth, but a second moan pulled her to her senses, giving her the strength to continue toward Jean de Satigny's laboratory door. She tried to open it, but it was locked. She pressed her face to the door. It was then that she clearly heard the moans, suffocated cries, and laughter, and no longer doubted that something was going on with the mummies. She returned to her room relieved to know that her nerves were not failing her but that something atrocious was going on in her husband's secret den.

The next day Blanca waited for Jean de Satigny to finish his meticulous toilette, eat his usual parsimonious breakfast, read his newspaper cover to cover, and finally leave on his morning walk, letting nothing in her placid, expectant mother's countenance betray her fierce determination. When Jean

went out, she called the high-heeled Indian and for the first time gave him an order.

"Go to the city and buy me some candied papaya," she told him brusquely.

The Indian set off at the slow trot typical of his race, and she remained in the house with the other servants, whom she feared far less than that strange individual with the courtly inclinations. Since she estimated that she had a couple of hours before he returned, she decided not to be too hasty, and to proceed calmly. She was determined to clear up the mystery of the furtive mummies. Convinced that in daylight the mummies would be in no mood for clowning, she went to the darkroom hoping that the door would be open, but it was locked, as always. She tried all the keys on her ring but none of them worked. Then she took the biggest knife from the kitchen, slipped it into the doorjamb, and forced it until the dried-out wood splintered and came out in fragments. Thus she managed to pry the lock loose from the frame and open the door. The damage to the door was impossible to hide, and she realized that when her husband saw it she would have to give some rational explanation, but she consoled herself with the argument that as mistress of the house she had a right to know what was going on beneath her roof. Despite her common sense, which had withstood more than twenty years' worth of the three-legged table and her mother's prognostications, she was trembling as she crossed the threshold of the darkroom.

She groped for the light switch and flicked it on. She found herself in a spacious room with black walls and thick black curtains on the windows, through which not even a feeble ray of sunlight filtered. The floor was covered with dark, thick rugs. Everywhere were the bulbs, lamps, and screens she had first seen Jean use at old Pedro García's funeral, when he had been so enamored of photographing the living and the dead that he made everyone uneasy and the peasants ended up kicking his photographic plates to the ground. She looked around in bewilderment: she was standing in the middle of the strangest scene. She continued forward, sidestepping open trunks that held plumed garments from every period, curled wigs, and ostentatious hats. She stopped before a golden trapeze, suspended from the



ceiling, on which hung a disjointed life-size puppet. In a corner she saw a stuffed llama; on the tables were bottles filled with amber-colored liquids, and on the floor the skins of exotic animals. But what most surprised her were the photographs. She stood open-mouthed before them. The walls of Jean de Satigny's studio were covered with distressing erotic scenes that revealed her husband's hidden character.

Blanca was slow to react, and it was a while before she realized what she saw, because she had no experience in such matters. Pleasure, to her, was the final, precious stage of the long road she had traveled with Pedro Tercero, on which she had moved unhurried and in good spirits, framed by the forests, the wheatfields, the river, and the immense sky, in the silence of the countryside. She had never felt the uncertainties of adolescence. While her classmates secretly read forbidden romances about passionate suitors and virgins aching to be so no longer, she sat in the shade of the plum trees in the convent courtyard, closed her eyes, and summoned with complete precision the magnificent vision of Pedro Tercero García holding her in his arms, stroking and kissing her, and eliciting from her the same profound harmony he drew from his guitar. Her instincts were satisfied as soon as they were awakened, and she had never imagined that passion could take other forms. These chaotic, tormented scenes were a thousand times more disconcerting than the scandalous mummies she had expected to find.

She recognized the faces of the household servants. There was the entire Incan court, as naked as God had put them on this earth, or barely clad in theatrical costumes. She saw the fathomless abyss between the thighs of the cook, the stuffed llama riding atop the lame servant girl, and the silent servant who waited on her at table, naked as a newborn babe, hairless and short-legged, with his expressionless stone face and his disproportionate, erect penis.

For an interminable second, Blanca was suspended in her own uncertainty; then she was overcome with horror. She managed to think clearly. She understood what Jean de Satigny had meant on their wedding night when he explained that he did not feel inclined to married life. She also glimpsed the sinister power of the Indian and the subtle mockery of the servants, and felt herself a prisoner in the

anteroom of hell. Just then the child moved inside her and she jumped as if an alarm had just been sounded.

"My daughter! I have to get out of here!" she cried, hugging her womb. She ran out of the darkroom, crossed the entire house in a flash, and reached the street, where the leaden heat and the ruthless midday sun brought her back to reality. She understood that she would not get very far on foot with her nine-month belly. She returned to her bedroom, took all the money she could find, prepared a bundle containing some of the clothing from the splendid wardrobe she had knit, and left for the station.

Seated on the hard wooden bench near the tracks, with her bundle in her lap and her eyes full of fright, Blanca waited hours for the train, praying that the count, on returning home and discovering the damage to his laboratory door, would not come looking for her and force her to return to the evil kingdom of the Incas. She prayed for the train to be on time for once in its life so that she might arrive at her parents' before the creature that was crushing her insides and kicking at her ribs announced its arrival in the world. She prayed for the strength to endure this two-day journey. And she prayed that her desire to live would be stronger than this terrible sense of desolation that was beginning to paralyze her. She gritted her teeth and waited.

to trust him and came forward. She explained that he would have to wait, because her grandfather had still not returned from Congress, and she told him that there was a mob of people in the kitchen on account of the party, and promised him that later on she would bring him some sweets. Esteban García felt more comfortable. He sat down in one of the black leather armchairs and little by little drew the child toward him and sat her on his knees. Alba smelled of bay rum, a sweet, fresh scent that mingled with the natural smell of sweaty little girl. The boy put his nose against her neck and inhaled that unknown perfume of cleanliness and well-being; without knowing why, his eyes filled with tears. He felt that he hated this little girl almost as much as he did old Trueba. She embodied everything he would never have, never be. He wanted to hurt her, destroy her, but he also wanted to continue smelling her, listening to her baby's voice, and having her soft skin within reach of his hand. He stroked her knees, just above the border of her embroidered socks. They were warm and had little dimples. Alba continued chattering about the cook who had stuck walnuts up the chickens' tails for the evening meal. He closed his eyes. He was shaking. With one hand he encircled the child's neck. He felt the tickle of her braids against his wrist and squeezed ever so gently, aware that she was so tiny he could strangle her with very little effort. He wanted to do it, feel her writhing and kicking at his knees, squirming as she fought for air. He wanted to hear her moan and die in his arms. He wanted to pull off her clothes. He felt violently aroused. With his other hand he ventured beneath her well-starched dress, running his fingers up her child's legs until he found the lace of her batiste petticoats and her woolen drawers with their elastic bands. He was panting. In a corner of his brain he had just enough sanity left to realize that he was poised on the edge of a bottomless pit. The child had stopped talking and was very still, staring up at him with her huge black eyes. Esteban García took her hand and placed it on his stiffened sex.

"Do you know what this is?" he asked hoarsely.

"Your penis," she replied, for she had seen it in the illustrations of her Uncle Jaime's medical books and on her

Uncle Nicolás whenever he walked around naked doing his Oriental exercises.

He jumped. He stood up suddenly and she fell to the carpet. He was surprised and frightened. His hands were shaking, his knees had become weak, and his ears were burning. Just then he heard Senator Trueba's footsteps in the hallway and seconds later, before he could catch his breath, the old man walked into the library.

"Why is it so dark in here?" he roared in his earthquake of a voice.

Trueba turned on the lights and seemed not to recognize the young man who was staring wild-eyed at him. He stretched his arms out to his granddaughter and she ran to him for cover for a moment, like a whipped puppy, but she quickly pried herself free and ran out, shutting the door behind her.

"Who are you, man?" he spat at the one who was also his grandchild.

"Esteban García. Don't you remember me, *patrón*?" the other managed to stammer.

Then Trueba recognized the crafty little boy who had betrayed Pedro Tercero years before and who had retrieved his amputated fingers. He understood that it would not be easy to send him away without giving him a hearing, despite the fact that as a rule matters concerning his tenants were supposed to be resolved by the foreman at Tres Marías.

"What do you want?" he asked.

Esteban García hesitated for a moment. He could not find the words he had so carefully prepared for months before daring to knock at the door of the *patrón*'s house.

"Hurry up, I don't have much time," Trueba said.

Stuttering, García managed to make his plea: he had completed high school in San Lucas and wanted a recommendation to the police academy and a government subsidy to pay for his studies.

"Why don't you stay in the country like your father and grandfather?" the *patrón* asked him.

"Forgive me, *señor*, but I want to be a policeman," pleaded Esteban García.

Trueba remembered that he still owed him the reward for betraying Pedro Tercero García, and he decided that this

the catalogue of whores, which they had managed to reproduce and distribute throughout certain provinces, arousing in the men a desire one day to visit the famous brothel.

"It's boring to walk around in these rags and grapes, *patrón*, but the men like it. When they leave, they tell others and that brings us new customers. We're doing very well. It's a good business, and no one here feels exploited. We're all partners. This is the only whorehouse in the country with its own authentic Negro. You might have seen others, but they're all painted. But you can rub Mustafá with sandpaper and he'll still be black. And this place is clean. You can drink the water from the toilet bowl if you want to, because we pour lye where you'd least expect it and we're all supervised by the Board of Health. No venereal diseases here."

Tránsito removed her last veil, and her magnificent nakedness so overwhelmed me that I immediately felt deathly tired. My heart was weighed with sadness and my penis was as flaccid as a withered, aimless flower between my legs.

"Ah, Tránsito," I said. "I think I'm too old for this."

But Tránsito Soto began to undulate the serpent around her navel, hypnotizing me with the gentle curve of her belly while she lulled me with that hoarse bird voice of hers, telling me about the benefits of the cooperative and the advantages of the catalogue. Despite everything, I had to laugh, and gradually my own laughter began to affect me like a balm. I tried to trace the serpent's path with my finger, but it slipped away from me, zigzagging. I was astonished that this woman who was no longer in her first or second youth should have such firm skin and muscles that were capable of making that reptile move as if it were alive. I bent down to kiss the tattoo and was pleased to discover that she wasn't wearing perfume. The warm, safe scent of her belly entered my nostrils and completely invaded me, awakening in my blood a fire I had thought long since extinguished. Without ceasing to speak, Tránsito opened her legs, casually separating the soft columns of her thighs as if she were simply adjusting her posture. I began to cover her with my lips, inhaling, pressing, and licking, until I forgot all about my grief and the weight of the years, and my desire returned with the force of other times, and without stopping my kisses and caresses I pulled my clothes off in desperation, happy to discover my

masculinity intact and firm while I plunged into the warm, compassionate animal that was offering itself to me, rocked by the little hoarse bird, wrapped in the arms of the goddess, and shaken by the force of those hips until I lost all consciousness of things and exploded with pleasure.

Afterward we soaked together in the bathtub until my soul returned to my body and I felt practically cured. For a second I toyed with the fantasy that Tránsito was the woman I had always needed and that with her by my side I could return to the days when I was able to lift a sturdy peasant woman in the air, pull her up onto my horse's haunches, and carry her off into the bushes against her will.

"Clara . . ." I murmured without thinking, and I felt a tear roll down my cheek and then another and another until it became a downpour of grief, a torrent of sobs, a suffocation of nostalgia and sorrow that Tránsito Soto had no trouble understanding, for she had long experience with the heartaches of men. She let me weep out all the misery and loneliness of recent years and helped me out of the tub with a mother's care. She dried me off, massaged me until I was as soft as moistened bread, and pulled the covers over me when I closed my eyes in the bed. She kissed me on the forehead and tiptoed out of the room.

"I wonder who Clara is," I heard her murmur as she left.



past, four inches from their heads, amidst the hard laughter of the soldiers and the howl of the fire engines. In the distance they could hear the sound of war planes. A long while later they divided the prisoners into groups, according to their guilt. Jaime was taken to the Ministry of Defense, which had been transformed into a barracks. They made him walk in a squatting position, as if he were in a trench, and led him into an enormous room filled with naked men who had been tied up in lines of ten, their hands bound behind their backs, so badly beaten that some could hardly stand. Rivulets of blood were running down onto the marble floor. Jaime was led into the boiler room, where other men were lined up against the wall beneath the watchful eye of a pale soldier who kept his machine gun trained on them. There he stood motionless for a long time, managing to stay erect as if he were sleepwalking, still not understanding what was happening and tormented by the screams coming through the walls. He noticed that the soldier was watching him. Suddenly the man lowered his gun and came up to him.

"Sit down and rest, Doctor. But if I tell you to, stand up immediately," he said softly, handing him a lighted cigarette. "You operated on my mother and saved her life."

Jaime did not smoke, but he savored that cigarette, inhaling as slowly as he could. His watch was destroyed, but his hunger and thirst led him to believe that it was night. He was so tired and uncomfortable in his stained trousers that he did not even wonder what was going to happen to him. His head was beginning to nod when the soldier came over to him again.

"Get up, Doctor," he whispered. "They're coming for you now. Good luck!"

A moment later two men walked in, handcuffed him, and led him before an officer who was in charge of interrogating the prisoners. Jaime had seen him on occasion in the company of the President.

"We know you have nothing to do with this, Doctor," he said. "We just want you to appear on television and say that the President was drunk and he committed suicide. After that you can go home."

"Do it yourself. Don't count on me, you bastards," Jaime said.

They held him down by the arms. The first blow was to his stomach. After that they picked him up and smashed him down on a table. He felt them remove his clothes. Much later, they carried him unconscious from the Ministry of Defense. It had begun to rain, and the freshness of the water and the air revived him. He awoke as they were loading him onto an Army bus and sat him down in the last seat. He saw the night through the window and when the vehicle began to move he could see the empty streets and flag-decked buildings. He understood that the enemy had won and he probably thought about Miguel. The bus pulled into the courtyard of a military regiment. They took him off the bus. There were other prisoners in the same condition. They tied their hands and feet with barbed wire and threw them on their faces in the stalls. There Jaime and the others spent two days without food or water, rotting in their own excrement, blood, and fear, until they were all driven by truck to an area near the airport. In an empty lot they were shot on the ground, because they could no longer stand, and then their bodies were dynamited. The shock of the explosion and the stench of the remains floated in the air for a long time.

In the big house on the corner, Senator Trueba opened a bottle of French champagne to celebrate the overthrow of the regime that he had fought against so ferociously, never suspecting that at that very moment his son Jaime's testicles were being burned with an imported cigarette. The old man hung a flag over the entrance of his house and did not go outside to dance because he was lame and because there was a curfew, but not because he did not want to, as he jubilantly announced to his daughter and granddaughter. Meanwhile, hanging on to the telephone, Alba was attempting to get word on those she was most worried about: Miguel, Pedro Tercero, her Uncle Jaime, Amanda, Sebastián Gómez, and so many others.

"Now they're going to pay for everything!" Senator Trueba exclaimed, raising his glass.

Alba snatched it from his hand and hurled it against the wall, shattering it to bits. Blanca, who had never had the courage to oppose her father, did not attempt to hide her smile.

# — Central High School —

HOME OF THE BULLDOGS

June 13, 2008

Dear ~~Mr. and Mrs. [REDACTED]~~

The Central High School Building Review Committee met on Friday, June 6, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. at Central High School, to discuss your request to have *The House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende removed from the International Baccalaureate English III-Honors curriculum. After careful consideration of your concerns about the novel and following an examination of the goals of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, the Committee recommends that *The House of the Spirits* be retained as part of the English III-Honors curriculum. The Committee is making this recommendation for a number of reasons.

First, International Baccalaureate students are not typical high school students. These students have been identified as having the potential to meet the intellectual and emotional demands of the IB program. A rigorous evaluation process is employed to determine the readiness of such students to participate in the challenges of the IB curricula. Graduates of IB classes are awarded college credits for high school course work, because the course content is recognized as appropriate for college-level instruction. In English classes, students may earn as much as nine hours of college credit while completing the IB course requirements. *The House of the Spirits* is an excellent example of the type of post-secondary literary material students will encounter at the university level, and it is an accurate representation of the kind of texts recommended for use in the literary analysis curriculum by the IB accreditation organization.

Second, International Baccalaureate studies are truly "international," and intentionally so. Students are exposed to college-level expectations concerning academic rigor, while experiencing perspectives and mores that differ from their native cultures. The essence of the IB program necessarily involves a potential degree of discomfort, as historical events are explored through an analysis of the viewpoints of people from societies that may not share a student's particular value system. *The House of the Spirits* is included as instructional material in IB English III-Honors for its literary merit, for its presentation of Latin American history within the context of Chilean society, and for its presentation of universal conflicts and themes.

Third, *The House of the Spirits* presents life through mature content, dealing with adult issues in an adult manner. As a result, some passages may be disturbing to some readers. Some of these passages are the ones that have been identified for the Committee to review. Indeed, the passages in question are graphic and disturbing. However, in context, these passages contribute to the larger point Allende is making about man's inhumanity to man. Allende does not sanction the behaviors she describes; rather, she indicts those behaviors as inappropriate and abnormal. Through the use of these passages, Allende challenges the reader to share in her outrage against abuse, insensitivity, and the devaluing of human life. This point is made clear at the end of the novel, where the central character resolves to break the cycle of degradation and violence that she has witnessed and experienced her entire life.

423 EAST CENTRAL AVENUE • SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI 65802  
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# — Central High School —

HOME OF THE BULLDOGS

Fourth, instruction has been carefully designed to present *The House of the Spirits* to students. Students do not read the material independently, without supervision. Instruction and guidance are provided to equip students to understand the literary elements of the text and to interpret and appreciate the historical setting and events that Allende describes. The instructor for the IB English III-Honors course is a qualified and accredited IB instructor who has demonstrated respect and sensitivity to the individual concerns expressed by students regarding the novel. Students are given the option of selecting an alternative literary work from the IB curriculum, and the instructor has willingly assisted such students in this process. In addition, the quality of instruction concerning *The House of the Spirits* has been exemplary.

Fifth, *The House of the Spirits* has been in the IB curriculum since 1999, and the current concerns over content represent the first time that the content of this text has been questioned. The Committee recognizes and supports the right of a parent to request an alternative text for her child, based on her concerns; however, the Committee also recognizes and supports the same right for every other parent to determine the appropriateness of the materials used for instruction. These rights are also responsibilities, and the Committee encourages all parents to become aware of the course content that their children are experiencing in the IB curriculum. In order to facilitate this awareness, Mrs. Vicki Johnson, the IB Coordinator for Central High School, informs parents and students concerning the rigors of the program and the content that they will be experiencing. The Committee understands that Mrs. Johnson, prior to Karina's enrollment in the IB curricula, provided information indicating that the IB coursework would include mature content, designed for students older than Karina, who was approximately two years younger than her classmates. After receiving this cautionary information from Mrs. Johnson, Karina was enrolled in the diploma program. This decision resulted in her exposure to *The House of the Spirits* at the age of fourteen, during her junior year of high school. Although some parents may feel that *The House of the Spirits* is inappropriate for their child to study, their reservations concerning this material are not a justification for removing the same right to approve or disapprove from other parents. In contrast to the objections presented to the Committee, other parents have expressed approval for the novel, communicating their children's positive experiences as a result of competent instruction and analysis. Furthermore, some high school students are legally emancipated and independent, having the right to decide for themselves the appropriateness of course content. A point must also be made regarding *The House of the Spirits* and the forfeiture of IB diplomas. As of this date, no IB student has ever forfeited a full IB diploma as a result of choosing not to read *The House of the Spirits*.

Finally, in recognition of the fact that parents may have concerns about exposing their children to accelerated material, the request to enhance communication between the IB program and parents has the support of the Committee.

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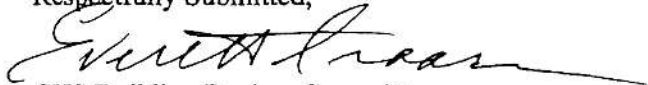
# — Central High School —

HOME OF THE BULLDOGS

Therefore, the Central High School Building Review Committee submits the following recommendations.

1. *The House of the Spirits* will be retained as a part of the IB English III-Honors curriculum.
2. The IB Coordinator will draft a letter to parents providing them with a list of all texts in all subjects that will be used throughout the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
3. Parents will be encouraged to review materials prior to the fall semester of their child's junior year of high school, since this semester marks the commencement of the IB Diploma Program.
4. Parents will be made aware of IB goals, course rigor, and course content through informational meetings and correspondences, as necessary.

Respectfully Submitted,



CHS Building Review Committee  
Everett Isaacs  
Chair





# Springfield Public Schools

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Tefft Center

January 16, 2009

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Springfield, MO [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

In accordance with District policy KLB - Reconsideration of a Book or Other Instructional Materials and your subsequent request for reconsideration of *The House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende, a district committee was convened at 4:00 PM on Thursday, December 18, 2009.

Prior to attending the meeting, each committee member received a copy of and read *The House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende.

Members reviewed the Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Educational Material which you originally completed and returned to Central High School related to *The House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende.

Following discussion, the committee voted 4-2: Judged as a whole and taking into account the purpose of the material rather than individual and isolated expressions or incidents of the work, *The House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende should continue to be available for use in IB English III Honors at Central High School.

If you wish to appeal the decision of the District committee, please contact the Office of the Superintendent at 523-0026.

Your input is valued and respected. Thank you for your involvement in the review process.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Kelvin C. Pamperien  
Director of Instructional Improvement

CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

Objection relates to: ☒ Library Book ☐ Textbook ☐ Other, please specify

Title: *Forever In Blue* (Type of resource)

Author: *Ann Bra shares*

Producer or Publisher: *Delacorte Press* Copyright Date: *2007*

Request initiated by: [REDACTED]

Telephone: *Home 417* [REDACTED] Address: [REDACTED]

City: *Springfield* *Mo* Zip Code: [REDACTED]

Complainant represents: ☒ Individual ☐ Organization ☐ Group

(Name of organization or group): *pg. 288-89*

1. Reason for objection (Please be specific; cite pages, if applicable) *Explicit Sexual Content. pg 47-53 Alcohol Abuse by Minors 201-212 192-198*
2. Did you examine or read the material in its entirety? What parts did you view or read? *Yes - Skimmed for content entire book*
3. What would you like the district to do about this material?
  - ..... do not assign/lend it to my child
  - ☒ withdraw it from all readers/students as well as my child
  - ..... send it back to the staff selection committee for re-evaluation
  - ..... other

If other, please specify the action. *FYE-360 Youth LLC & Alley Entertainment is a company that promotes projects & agenda among school-college age kids.*

Signature: [REDACTED]

May 20, 2008

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Springfield, MO [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

The site review committee has met regarding your request to have the book, Forever in Blue – The Fourth Summer of the Sisterhood, by Ann Brashares removed from circulation for all students at Pleasant View Middle School (PVMS). The committee agreed with your assertion that the book is not appropriate for your daughter, and possibly other students at PVMS. However, the committee did not agree that the book should be completely censored from **all** students at PVMS. The committee based their decision on the Board of Education policy IIA which I have included with this letter. In particular, the committee cited three points in the policy that they believe warranted the inclusion of this book in the library. These three points are part of the criteria for the selection of instructional materials. The criteria states that the materials selected shall:

- Enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.
  - *The committee believed that because of the varied maturity levels at PVMS this book should not be excluded from all students.*
- Provide a background of information which will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
  - *The committee agreed that the book deals with adult issues, but also believed that the author did not glorify or advocate for making decisions similar to those made by the characters in the story. In fact, in the end the author made the reader realize the regret for making poor choices.*
- Provide information on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop, under guidance, the practice of critical and analytical reading and thinking.
  - *The committee believed that this book put realistic situations in front of the reader that students are likely to be faced with in the near future. Even at the middle school level, students are faced with moral and ethical dilemmas similar to those of the characters in this story.*



# Springfield Public Schools

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Tefft Center

July 25, 2008

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Springfield, MO [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

In accordance with District policy KLB - Reconsideration of a Book or Other Instructional Materials and your subsequent request for reconsideration of the Pleasant View Middle School library book *Forever in Blue, The Fourth Summer of the Sisterhood* by Ann Brashares, a district committee was convened at 9:00 AM on Wednesday, July 16, 2008. The committee was comprised of: Curriculum Facilitators, Middle School Teacher, Middle School Counselor, Middle School Librarians, Middle School Parent, District Patron, and facilitated by the Director of Instructional Improvement.

Prior to attending the meeting, each committee member received a copy of and read *Forever in Blue, The Fourth Summer of the Sisterhood* by Ann Brashares.

Members reviewed the Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of Educational Material which you originally completed and returned to Pleasant View related to *Forever in Blue, The Fourth Summer of the Sisterhood* by Ann Brashares.

Following discussion, the District committee voted 7-1: Judged as a whole and taking into account the purpose of the material rather than individual and isolated expressions or incidents of the work, *Forever in Blue, The Fourth Summer of the Sisterhood* by Ann Brashares should continue to be available in the Pleasant View Middle School library.

If you wish to appeal the decision of the District committee, please contact the Office of the Superintendent at 523-0026.

Your input is valued and respected. Thank you for your involvement in the review process.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Kelvin C. Pamperien  
Director of Instructional Improvement



I want to thank you for your diligence in screening what your child reads at school. It is refreshing to see a parent that actually reviews the instructional materials made available to students. Even though we disagreed with your claim to have this particular book removed from circulation, we appreciate the fact that you alerted us to this concern so the proper process could be utilized to determine the appropriateness of the book for our library collection. If I can be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

Sincerely,

Ron E. Snodgrass, Ed.D.  
Principal